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LETTER DATED 17 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter in Arabic from His Excellency Dr. Abdulkarim Al-Eryani, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, concerning the new Eritrean aggression on the Lesser Yemeni Hanish Island.

I would be grateful if you could have the text of the present letter to be distributed to the members of the Security Council and circulated as a document to the Council.

(Signed) Hamed M. OBADI
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

[Original: Arabic]

Letter dated 17 August 1996 from the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yemen addressed to the President of the Security Council

My country has already informed you, by its letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, of the new aggression by Eritrea against Yemen's Lesser Hanish Island in violation of the Agreement on Principles signed by the two countries on 21 May 1996 and the subsequent agreement on technical arrangements between them and France.

France has submitted a report to the Secretary-General, based on information received from its observers in the Red Sea, confirming the new aggression by Eritrea and the fact that it has occupied positions on Yemen's Lesser Hanish Island.

Appreciating as it does the extreme concern expressed by the members of the Security Council at their informal consultations on 16 August 1996, acknowledging the call of the members of the Council for the greatest self-restraint and for the efforts being made to be given a chance to succeed, and responding to the appeals made by the Security Council, the Secretary-General, the United States of America and France, the Republic of Yemen would like on this occasion to affirm its full commitment to the Agreement on Principles signed by Yemen and Eritrea. Accordingly, given the new Eritrean aggression, it urges the Security Council to meet its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations, to condemn the aggression and to compel Eritrea to evacuate forthwith its newly established presence on Yemen's Lesser Hanish Island and to comply with the Agreement on Principles and resolve the dispute in a peaceful manner by arbitration.

In any event, we reserve our legitimate right, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, to defend our territory by all possible means.

We are confident that the Council realizes the significance and gravity of the actions of the Eritrean Government as they affect the security and safety of international navigation in the Red Sea and world peace as a whole, and we feel sure that it will expedite the adoption of the necessary steps to compel Eritrea to evacuate Yemen's Lesser Hanish Island and restore the status quo ante.

On this occasion, while we continue to affirm our sovereign rights over Yemen's Greater Hanish Island, a case that we agreed to submit to arbitration in order to maintain peace and safeguard international navigation, we hold the Government of Eritrea fully responsible for its new aggression and for the consequences to which it may give rise.

We request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdulkarim AL-ERYANI
Deputy Prime Minister
and Minister for Foreign Affairs